United Nations ST/IC/2006/51

Secretariat

28 November 2006

Information circular*

To: Members of the staff

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management

Subject: **Review of staff claims for dependency benefits for 2004 and 2005**

1. The purpose of the present circular is to inform staff members of the manner in which the review of their entitlements to dependency benefits for the years 2004 and 2005 will be conducted.

2. All staff at Headquarters and the staff of United Nations Information Centres, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and field missions, as well as project personnel administered by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs at Headquarters, with a dependant recognized by the United Nations must review their entitlements to dependency benefits as described in the present circular.

3. The electronic P.84 (e-P.84) and hard copy P.84 questionnaire form will contain the information currently recorded for each staff member and his or her dependants in the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS). Staff members are requested to review that information carefully, make any necessary changes or corrections and certify the accuracy of the information contained in the form, including the question regarding the amount of Government assistance for each child.

* Expiration date of the present information circular: 31 March 2007.

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I. Submission of claims using the electronic P.84 (only available for staff at Headquarters)

4. All staff at Headquarters who have a dependant recognized by the United Nations and who have access to computers will review their dependency data for 2004 and 2005 and submit proposed changes directly online to the Office of Human Resources Management using the electronic dependency questionnaire (e-P.84).

5. The e-P.84 form is also available for staff members at Headquarters who had no recognized dependants but wish to add new dependants for 2004 and 2005 on the condition that the required supporting documentation such as a birth or adoption certificate is submitted to the section that services their area identified in annex II.

6. Staff members at Headquarters can access the e-P.84 at the "My UN" website http://myun.un.org, if they are authenticated Galaxy users, or by visiting http://eP84.un.org if they do not have an authenticated "My UN" account.

II. Submission of claims using the hard copy P.84

7. All staff at Headquarters who do not have access to computers and staff of the United Nations Information Centres, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and field missions as well as project personnel administered by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs outside of New York will continue to use the P.84 dependency questionnaire form for the review of their entitlement to dependency benefits.

8. Staff members assigned to United Nations peacekeeping missions and those serving in established missions who were in receipt of a dependency benefit in 2004 and 2005 will receive a dependency questionnaire form P.84 from the Office of the Chief Civilian Personnel Officer of the respective mission. Those staff members should return the completed P.84 form to the Office of the Chief Civilian Personnel Officer.

9. All other offices away from Headquarters will review dependency claims for their own staff.

III. Supporting documentation

10. Documentation not required: No documentation is required for a staff member to continue receiving dependency benefits for the following dependants: an unemployed spouse, a child under the age of 18 if in the staff member's custody or a secondary dependant residing with the staff member. On the electronic form, staff members should indicate that no documentation is required.

11. Option to submit or retain documentation: The option to submit or retain supporting documentation is available to those staff members who submit their dependency questionnaires electronically using the e-P.84. On the electronic form, staff members must indicate whether they will submit or retain the supporting documentation listed in annex I for the following cases: a dependent spouse who has occupational earnings, a child between the ages of 18 and 21, and a secondary dependant who does not reside with the staff member.

12. Staff members who select the option of retaining the documentation must do so for five years, and must provide that documentation to the Office of Human Resources Management or the Office of Internal Oversight Services at any time upon request for monitoring purposes. Failure to do so will result in immediate recovery of monies and discontinuance of benefits.

13. Staff members who opt to submit required documentation must present **all** such documentation to the contact location identified in annex III. There is no option to submit partial documentation.

14. Documentation required: Staff members claiming dependency benefits for a new dependant who is added by the staff member using the e-P.84 for the first time or a child who is not in his/her custody must always submit the required documentation.

15. When it is necessary for support payments to be documented, the following will be considered as acceptable proof: original cancelled cheques, money order receipts, wire transfer receipts and original records of bank transactions.

16. In all cases, false certification of the information contained in the e-P.84 or P.84 form or misrepresentation of facts related to a claim for dependency benefits will lead to disciplinary action.

IV. Deadline for submission

17. For those staff members who do not submit the e-P.84 or P.84 questionnaire form and any requisite documentation within two months of the date of the present circular (within three months of the date of this circular, for staff serving in field missions and information centres), any dependency benefits will be discontinued and overpayment recovered. Prior to recovery of any overpayment, staff members will be advised in writing of the decision to recover and of the reasons for that decision. Recovery will be made through deductions of 20 per cent of the staff member's net monthly salary (excluding United Nations Federal Credit Union deductions) until such time as the full amount is recovered. In instances where the duration of the staff member's contract does not allow a deduction at as low a rate as 20 per cent, the overpayment will be deducted at a monthly rate sufficient to recover the full amount by the contract expiration date.

Annex I

Types of dependency benefits

1. Staff members in the General Service and related categories will receive a dependency allowance for each recognized primary dependant, who may be a spouse or a child or children. The amounts are set out in the local salary scales, which are established for every duty station and which are periodically revised.

2. Staff members in the Professional category and above, in the Project Personnel and in the Field Service category will be paid salary and post adjustment at the dependency rate for the first recognized primary dependant, who may be a spouse or a child. A dependency allowance will be paid for each additional primary dependant at the rates approved by the General Assembly.

Dependent spouse

3. A spouse will be recognized as a dependant when his or her gross occupational earnings, if any, do not exceed the limit established for this purpose in paragraph (a) of staff rule 103.24 for a particular calendar year.[a] All earnings limits are based on the salary scales in effect on 1 January of the year concerned.

Dependent child or children

4. The conditions for recognition of a dependency benefit on account of a child or children of the staff member are set out in paragraph (b) of staff rule 103.24 and administrative instruction ST/AI/2000/8 of 13 September 2000 and ST/AI/2000/8/Amend.1 of 15 March 2006. Dependency benefits on account of children with a disability will be paid in accordance with the provisions of ST/AI/2000/8 and Amend.1.

Secondary dependants

5. When a secondary dependant is recognized, a benefit will be paid at the rate determined by the General Assembly for staff in the Professional category and above, in the Project Personnel category and in the Field Service category. For staff in the General Service and related categories in New York, the allowance will be paid in the amount set out in the local salary scales, as periodically revised, that are established for every duty station.

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[a] In New York, the earnings limit for 2004 was $33,417 (gross salary in effect on 1 January of the year concerned for a staff member at the G-2, step I, level) and for 2005 it was $34,566. For 2006, the earnings limit in New York is $36,545. For a spouse working in a country other than that of the staff member's duty station, the limit is the gross salary of the lowest entry level of the General Service salary scale applicable in the country of the spouse's place of work. For staff in the Professional category and above serving at any duty station, the limit may not be less than the equivalent of the G-2, step I, gross salary for New York.

Annex II

Contact locations

For staff members (a) without access to computers; (b) applying for dependency benefits for the first time; or (c) opting to submit supporting documentation, the following contact locations should be used in the event staff members have any substantive questions regarding dependency benefits, the P.84 or e-P.84:

Common Services Activities at Headquarters Section
Room S-2410:
- Department for General Assembly and Conference Management
- Department of Management
- Department of Safety and Security
- Executive Office of the Secretary-General
- Office of Internal Oversight Services
- United Nations Fund for International Partnerships

Offices at Headquarters with Field Activities Section
Room DC1-0218:
- Department of Peacekeeping Operations
- Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
- Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict
- United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission

Economic, Social, Political, Legal and Information Activities Section
Room S-2445:
- Department for Disarmament Affairs
- Department of Economic and Social Affairs
- Department of Political Affairs
- Department of Public Information (including all the information centres)
- International Civil Service Commission
- United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women
- Office of Legal Affairs
- Regional Commissions New York Office
- United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund
- Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States
- Office of the Special Adviser on Africa
- Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate

Overseas Offices Section
Room S-2435:
- International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and liaison offices

Technical Cooperation Management Services
Room DC1-1200:
- Project Personnel

Annex III

Required documentation for continuance of the benefit

The following table summarizes the documentation required as evidence of a staff member's entitlement to dependency benefits for 2004 and 2005.

For a spouse with no occupational earnings and claimed as a dependant	No additional documentation is required.
For a spouse with occupational earnings and claimed as a dependant	Proof of gross occupational earnings: W2 form, tax return or statement of earnings from spouse's employer.
For every child claimed as a dependant	An original birth certificate must be presented when the child is claimed as a dependant for the first time.
For a child under the age of 18 who resides with the staff member	No additional documentation is required.
For a child of a staff member who is not the custodial parent	The original or certified copy of the divorce decree or other court document specifying the amount of child support to be paid by the staff member plus proof of payment in the year concerned in the form of original cancelled cheques, money order or wire transfer receipts or records of bank transactions. The amount of payment should be at least the amount of the court-ordered child support, or the amount of the child dependency benefit, whichever is higher. In the absence of a court document, a notarized affidavit from the custodial parent must be provided attesting that the staff member provided continuing support and specifying the amounts paid during 2004 and 2005, along with the proof of payment described in the previous paragraph.
For a child between the ages of 18 and 21[a]	Staff members who were not in receipt of an education grant should submit a completed form P.41/B (Certificate of school attendance) for the school years 2003/04 and 2004/05. The determination for 2005 will be provisional pending submission of the same form for the 2005/06 school year. Where the school year coincides with the calendar year, form P.41/B should be submitted for 2004 and 2005. No additional documentation is required for a child for whom the staff member received an education grant for the academic years 2003/04, 2004/05 and 2005/06.

For a secondary dependant who resides with the staff member	Staff member's certification of support provided on the e-P.84.
For a secondary dependant who did not reside with the staff member	Proof of all payments made to the secondary dependant during 2004 and 2005 in the form of original cancelled cheques, money order or wire transfer receipts or records of bank transactions.

[a] Dependency status is recognized through a period of vacation between school years when the child enrols for full-time attendance during the regular school year. Otherwise, the dependency status ceases as of the last day of full-time attendance at the educational institution. The requisite forms are available on iSeek under Staff information/more.../Forms or from the Executive or Administrative Offices at Headquarters and local Personnel Offices.